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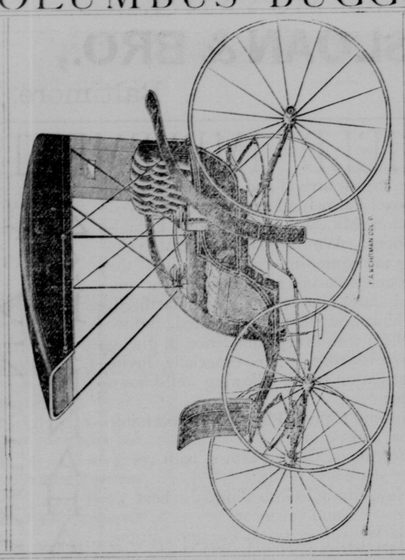

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CHAPTER II.

"I will answer for Mr. Hall's dreams to-night."

When we returned to town in the middle of September I was "all agog to dash through thick and thin," and all the more impatient because I knew that two months must yet elapse before the season would fairly begin. A visit to Lotty when her family came home from Newport and Olive Grene's garden party helped to stay my desires to a small extent; and, as every week passed by, I used to see one or two of the men, whom by that time I knew, strolling through Rittenhouse square or walking in Walnut street. Mr. Boullter insisted on rowing me up the river. I think he would willingly have had me take supper with him at Strawberry mansion quite by ourselves, but I positively refused to row with him alone except in the morning; and I only did it once, being a little disturbed, I confess, by the other men at the boat house. Not that I was afraid of them; but I did not want to be talked about, and at that time did not know enough to discriminate. I would gladly have been rowed by him for days together, however, for he looked admirable in flannels.

At last came the great event—Mrs. Hathorne's dinner for Lotty.

I feel again my thrill of delight on hearing our door bell ring as I stood in my room on that well remembered evening, for I knew that it must be Olive Grene, who had promised to come for me in her coupe. I scarcely waited for the little maid to tell me that the carriage had come, but kissed my mother affectionately, gave a peck at my sister Bessy, who had been bothering me a good deal with persistent questions and suggestions, and flew down stairs in order to escape any family demonstration on the doorstep. I found Olive in quite a whirl of excitement. Her wildness infected me, and when we rustled in from the dark street to the blazing hall at the Hathornes' I felt almost ready to rush into the little ante-room, through the half open door of which I caught a glimpse of masculine figures and heard a snatch of masculine laughter, execute a fandango and dance out again, just by way of prelude to the evening's diversion.

But I was sobered by suddenly finding myself in Lotty's room face to face with two or three girls whom I did not know, and with Letty Risquict, who instantly tried to snub me, and my thoughts were turned to the graver aspect of the situation. I threw off my cloak and carefully inspected myself, and then hastened to the assistance of Olive, who had misplaced a ribbon or lost a pin, and presently we went down to the parlor, where stood Mrs. Hathorne, calm and gracious, and Lotty, who was looking very pretty and a little flushed. The men were all on the field before us, and in a very short time we had formed our procession and were parading into the dining room.

I was taken in by Mr. Mason Temple, as I had expected. Indeed, when Lotty offered me my choice among the men, I determined upon him. I longed for Mr. Boullter, it is true, but I did not dare to ask for him; and I remembered that when Mr. Temple saw me sitting on a haycock at the Grene's garden party he told Olive that I made the prettiest Phyllis he had ever beheld, and so I named him for my Amintor. When I announced my determination to Lotty, she said that as I had declared for sentiment she would see that I did not lose any worldly advantage, and that she would put Mr. Charter on the other side of me.

"Macy" Temple, as everybody called him, was a tall, slight young man, with a good humored expression, who made fun of himself when nobody else could be found for a victim, who was something of a dilettante, and supposed to be a contributor to the magazines; Mr. Algernon Fairfax Van Strouslaer Penn Charter (his mother had been one of the Van Strouslaers and her mother a Fairfax) possessed a pedigree before which Englishmen might have bowed, and gymnastic ability which was said to be the delight of professionals—in addition to which he was of considerable fortune, very fond of entertaining, and, as he was accustomed to call himself, "a well known sport!" Between these two young men I felt eminently well satisfied, and, to my surprise, perfectly calm.

I looked around the table as I drew off my gloves. It was a large dinner—twenty-six, I think—and Lotty had made it up very carefully. It was supposed to contain the choicest of the men in society and the most promising of the buds of the season. It was quite a distance from one end of the long table to the other, and the room looked magnificent, with its high walls covered with family portraits, and this splendid glittering parallelogram in the very middle under the chandelier. I looked down the row of faces; everybody was talking and laughing—there was a rattle of conversation. I laughed softly to myself and drummed on the table. The cloth was deliciously white; my fingers looked so smooth and clean and delicate that I quite fell in love with them.

The plate before me was Sevres; a lovely basket of Jacqueminot roses was placed in front of it; any number of bewildering wine glasses, some cut glass, some Bohemian, stood at hand; the silver was King pattern. Further off was a gorgeous epergne, round the corner of which I could see Olive smiling at me; I drew a long breath in the fullness of my joy, and, as Mr. Temple was looking away, I turned to Mr. Charter and beamed upon him. His face lighted up in a remarkably sudden manner, and he gently took my dinner card, which I had been twirling in my fingers, and proposed to draw a diagram of the table on it for me.

He took up a tiny champagne bottle which dangled from his watch chain, out of which he had shot a little pencil, and then, before beginning his task, and as if with a fresh access of hope, begged me to exchange my dinner card for his. Mr. Temple, who had by this time turned round, objected strongly to Mr. Charter's plans; and of course the latter persisted, though he ought to have been attending to his own girl. They both appealed to me so violently that I was a little afraid of making a mistake, and felt for a moment that it would be better to keep my card as a safe method of settling the dispute, but I quickly recovered myself, and bade Mr. Temple remember that he had taken his eyes off me, and naturally ought to suffer for it. Mr. Charter accordingly kept my card, and began writing the names of the party for me on his own, a labor much interrupted by scornful remarks from Mr. Temple, who, I instantly saw, could be very amusing if he wished.

In the course of time Mr. Charter finished the card, and presented it to me with an air of triumph; but his face fell when I allowed Mr. Temple to persuade me to accept his boutonniere and give him one of my roses in place of it. Up to this time I had felt a little that I ought not to encourage another girl's man too much; but my conscience hardened with my success, especially as Mr. Charter had taken in Letty Risquict, to whom I owed a grudge for her behavior to me in the dressing room, and I now laid myself out to keep both men talking to me as long as possible, so I smiled at all Mr. Charter's somewhat glaring compliments. I capped Mr. Temple's quotations, I shook my head with a look that might have meant anything at the insinuations of each about the other, till finally (but not until the Roman punch came round) Mr. Charter found that his staying powers were not so good as those of his adversary, and turned to Letty with a somewhat guilty look. She, as I hoped, and subsequently was assured, was angry enough to have upset the salad dressing over me.

As Mr. Charter turned away, Mr. Temple gave vent to a prodigious sigh of pretended relief. "At last I have you to myself," said he.

"But you have been talking to me all the evening," I answered.

"Mr. Charter has been listening to me too."

"Do you grudge me the attention of another man? Oh, how selfish is your sex!"

"Rather, how grasping is yours! You have made me wait till now for an opportunity to say what you know I have been dying to say to you."

As he murmured these last words his face wore an expression of the most intense earnestness—but there was a twinkle in the corner of his eye. I determined if he was going to be outrageous I would be outrageous too.

"Perhaps," I said, with an air of diffidence, "perhaps I was afraid to listen to you."

I saw that he would have liked to laugh, but did not wish to spoil the flirtation.

"May I say it?" he whispered again, in passionate tones.

I pretended to look at my fan, and then turned round to him. "Yes," I said.

He pretended to hesitate. "And yet I dare not, so soon," he said. Then he began to repeat:

"Si vous croyez que je vais dire
Qui j'ose aimer,
Je ne saurais pour un empire
Vous la nommer!"

I was staggered by this; I had not expected him to be indirect. I laid down my fork and looked at him with mock agitation. "Oh, be explicit!" I cried. "Do not fear! let me encourage you!"

A slight smile flickered round his lips for a moment. Then his face grew grave and he said in a low tone, "Heavens! how beautiful your eyes are!"

I was caught. I blushed—faltered—I had to surrender. I laughed till I blushed again for laughing, and then laughed for blushing again.

After this our flirtation had to stop altogether or take a more really serious turn. I shall leave the reader to imagine upon which course we decided. I am very glad that Mr. Temple was not mischievous, for I might easily have been induced to disgrace myself. He was sufficiently to blame for making me flirt with him as wildly as I did—though, after all, it made very little difference, for every girl at the table was almost as excited as I was myself. When the crackers were being pulled I looked round again—my first general glance since the beginning of dinner. Everybody was talking at once; private raids were being made upon the dishes of fruits and sweetmeats—a candle fell down in front of Mr. Boullter, who picked it up, righted it and quietly fixed it upon the plate of the girl next to him, whereupon the man on the other side of her blew it out, the girl herself laughing and expostulating with both of them.

But now, much to my disgust, Mrs. Hathorne rose to lead us girls from the room. I followed her with a sigh, which Mr. Temple, in choking tones, immediately declared he echoed. He had previously, during the course of the dinner, much deplored the custom which made men remain at table after the women went to the parlor, but declared that he had not the moral courage to break through it. As we edged slowly toward the door I offered him another rose from my basket if he would accompany me to the parlor on this occasion, but he said that he wouldn't dare to offend the other men and that his doctor had ordered him to smoke "for a cruel nervous disease." I came very near telling him that I wished I could stay with him; and, indeed, I did wish to do so most violently, this desire being much stronger than the conflicting desire to go and talk it over with the girls, for I knew fairly well what they would say, and I positively ached to hear the male comments on the dinner, and I had a feeling that I should like to try a cigarette.

When the girls got together again in the parlor there was a buzz of "my dears," but after a minute or two we began to adjust ribbons and laces and to commend each other's appearance. This necessary duty being over, we began once more to talk over our fellow men. Olive Grene broke away from a little knot of girls and rushed toward me. "Girls," she cried out, "did you ever see anything so barefaced as Ethel's flirting?" Several of my friends made a group about me, and for a moment or two I was a target for all manner of accusations till I was able to restrain my choking laughter and retaliate in kind. Milly Mortmain caused much excitement by declaring that she had extracted from an anonymous man at the dancing class the night before an opinion about every girl in society; but as, when she was met by the immediate question, "Oh, Milly! what did he say about me?" she vowed that she was bound to secrecy, it was generally allowed that she was endeavoring to hoax us, for of course no girl would hesitate to break such a promise as that.

By the time we had finished our coffee I know I was quite ready for the men to join us, and I fancy that most of the girls felt as I did; but we were forced to wait for some time, while every now and then we heard the most tantalizing bursts of laughter from below. At last they appeared, Mr. Temple leading the way. I expected him to make for my side, but it seemed understood that the men were to talk no more to their partners at the table, but were to devote themselves to other girls. Just as I began to fancy that Bran Boullter was looking in my direction a tall, distinguished looking man who had been presented to me before dinner, and whom I had some difficulty in remembering as Mr. Middleton Hall, came up to me.

He bowed with a grave elegance of manner, and began at once, not a little to my surprise, to speak to me of my father, whom he said he remembered with feelings of great respect and gratitude. He explained to me the reason; it was only, I think, that about the time when he was admitted to the bar he made a great blunder through which a very important case in which my father was interested was nearly lost, and that my father, instead of being very angry, treated him with much kindness and patience. I confess that this conversation of Mr. Hall jarred ~~ The topic was quite at variance with my lively mood, and when Mr. Hall spoke of my father I could not help feeling slightly conscious. But though Mr. Hall's presence was somewhat irksome to me at first, I found myself after some time becoming interested in his conversation.

He began by asking me, but without any of the customary affectation, how I liked going about, and then, instead of annoying me with stale compliments and threadbare prophecies, talked very sensibly and very well about the necessity for social intercourse and the impropriety of judging the aims and effects of society by the internal feelings of pleasure or disappointment experienced by any member of it. "If," said he, "we are called upon to decide between the fanatic hermit and the empty headed fop, we are apt to declare in favor of the former, since his actions appear to us at least to be grounded upon reflection; yet in many cases we might find the hermit was actuated only by the sting of disappointment, the sway of avarice, the suggestions of spite and resentment, or the inability to conquer some morbid physical propensity—and that he possessed, no more than the fashionable butterfly, a logical conclusion by which to justify his habits and actions.

"I don't mean to say," said he, smiling, "that I think a fop the most admirable object in nature, but I'm not sure that he deserves all the abuse heaped upon him. And I dare say a misanthropist might just as well cloak his feelings under the disguise of folly as proclaim them in the character of a hermit." He said a good deal more, to which I listened intently, feeling quite sorry to have him go when he rose to leave me, and I stopped him eagerly when he began to apologize for the dryness of his conversation. As he moved away a voice behind me said:

"I will answer for Mr. Hall's dreams to-night."

I turned to behold Bran Boullter leaning toward me. I need not repeat what he said. It was the second time that evening that I had been complimented on my eyes. Some of the girls were by this time going off to a small dance at Leila Girard's, but Lotty begged the rest of us to stay, and so we gathered together round the little tea table, and Lotty made us all take a second cup of tea. What a jolly hour we spent together. Bran Boullter and Mason Temple were more amusing than I had ever imagined anybody could be; and though I afterward discovered the innate spitefulness of that little wretch Hamelin Towne, at that time I could not but be delighted with his descriptions of people and his mimicry. It was twelve o'clock before we got away. Bran Boullter and Mason Temple put us into the carriage, and Bran gave my hand an exceedingly affectionate squeeze as he said goodby—and I'm not sure that I didn't return it. As we rattled up the street—of course Mrs. Grene's coupe was not built to be run on the car tracks—I grasped Olive's hand and said:

"Hasn't it been just too perfect for anything!"

"Goodness, yes!" she answered. "I could dine forever!"

To be continued.

Grief.

Grief should be
Like joy—majestic, equable, sedate,
Continuing, cleansing, raising, making free.
Strong to consume small troubles, to command
Great thoughts, grave thoughts, thoughts lasting to the end.

One of the Thousands.

There are a great many suffering, unemployed men in this city, and their sufferings are augmented by the extreme coldness of the weather. The greater majority of this number are hungry, homeless and friendless. Some are deserving, temperate and of industrious habits. Knowledge of one of these has been brought by an echo. Many miles he had walked searching for work of any kind, earning a few cents here and there on some days, earning nothing on others. He is a man of good address, says he is a professional muse, and has evidently a good education. Temporary refuge he found in the People's church mission department recently opened. This man wants work of any kind that will earn him decent shelter and food. Can some one give it to him? Will some one give it to him? His name is James Thompson, and he can be reached through the Rev. Mr. Sheldon of the People's church.—Buffalo Express.

"Rights to Live."

The latest remedy for poverty is proposed for application to New Zealand by a resident there named Howlett. Mr. Howlett founds his scheme on a denial of every man's "right to live," at least in New Zealand, and he proposes, therefore, for the government to sell "Rights to Live," and deport all who did not possess such rights, or "put him to work on the roads." "Rights" would "soon command a certain price," sufficient to stop pauper immigration. Married people would have to buy a new right for each new child: sojourning passengers by ocean steamers would wear "small white rosettes," or would take out a limited right, a share of a ticket; people would sell their rights when they desired to emigrate; the state, by a popular vote, would create and sell new rights. Mr. Howlett christens his anti-poverty idea "Tirenism."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

They are not infallible prophets who gravely assume to foretell that to carry out the principles of the labor movement would cause disaster and upheavals. What organized labor proposes is eminently practicable and will be disagreeable in its consequences only to those who do not desire to work themselves, but live upon the product of the labor of others.—New York Evening World.

There seems to be irrefragable evidence that the American people is in hopeless bondage to corrupt wire pullers, and is sold by them, with hardly the pretense of concealment, to wealthy robbers—the financiers of speculative trusts and rings, which are really nothing else but organized and state protected swindling.—W. S. Lilly in Forum.

The prevailing state socialism in Australia is filling the larger towns with good things—excellent museums, splendid libraries, free reading rooms, parks, botanical gardens, manifold places of interest or amusement.—Century.

Breaking Up Colds in Children.

When children have taken colds there is nothing better to give them than molasses, butter and vinegar. To half cup molasses take a tablespoonful of butter and two tablespoonfuls of vinegar; cook a few minutes, and give a little frequently. Quite young children can take this.—Herald of Health.

Not Even on New Year's.

"Bronson must have lived an uneventful life."

"Why do you think so?"

"He left me his diaries for ten years when he died, and he hadn't written a line in any of 'em."—Harper's Bazar

TO AID WORKING WOMEN

A PLAN TO ENABLE THEM TO ATTEND THE WORLD'S FAIR.

Mrs. McGuirk First in the Field with Suggestions on a Subject Which Is of Unusual Interest to the Country's Women Wageworkers.

[Special Correspondence.]

Shall wage earners and working girls in particular go to the Columbian fair at Chicago whenever it is held?

There can hardly be but one sensible answer to that question, however it is regarded. The fair represents the combined efforts of the workers in its exhibits, and it is the especial aim of the ladies' board of managers that the work of women shall have a fair and equal standing with that of men. There will be gathered in the fair building handiwork of hundreds of women all over the United States and Europe. The joint product of man and woman will be shown, and woman given credit for everything that she has done.

The unique work, the ideas of bright women will be shown, the progress of women along the hundreds of lines where she is engaged will find expression, the inventions of women that are given form and shape by thousands of working girls scattered all over the country will be there.

And who ought to see these things if not the people who will later on create them? The inventor will be there. She or he may create ideas, but the working girl is going to give them life.

The ladies' board of managers is going to consider some plan by which working women may avail themselves to a wide degree of the opportunity to exhibit at the fair. They will endeavor to devise some practical scheme whereby women who are making articles that ought to be displayed, but by reason of poverty are unequal to the expense of maintaining an exhibit for six months, will be assisted to do so. Of course they can't take every one to see these exhibits, but there is one way by which working girls can arrange that for themselves. It is so simple that in these days of co-operative societies no one could doubt its practicability and the benefit of it.

It is by means of weekly contributions to a common fund, which shall be maintained from the time of the formation of the society until such time as it shall be withdrawn for fair expenses.

The details of the plan will have to be worked out to suit the conditions of the members of the associations, and doubtless will widely differ, but the general outlines may be similar, and these are advanced as being at the same time likely to be possible and practical.

The women in one mercantile or manufacturing establishment shall form themselves into a fair fund club. If the whole number who desire to try to go is very large then let those in one or two departments combine together instead. It is supposed, of course, that they will realize that the trip and study of the fair is going to be a benefit to them. There may be some who are not sure about being able to go finally. To meet this all payments must be credited to the individual making them, and if at any time she finds it necessary to withdraw the total amount of her payments can be returned.

The payment will be weekly or monthly according to the rate of wages obtained and the decision of the members as to the amount they can save up without hardship. As is always the case, any amount can be spent, but as this plan is designed for the approval of working women who receive from six to ten dollars a week it is not supposed that anything but the strictest economy and most prudent outlay will be contemplated. Some idea must be secured of how much the trip can be made for. It is proposed to endeavor to secure from the railroads a "working woman's" ticket that shall be only issued to members of fair fund clubs. Most women will doubtless feel as if a week was all the time they could afford to give to the fair besides the time necessary to travel, and it should give ample time to secure a good deal of benefit.

Entertainment while in Chicago is the next thing to be considered, and it is hoped that, if the women take hold of the club movement and make it sufficiently extensive, a plan of entertainment can be put in operation by Chicago women that will reduce the expenses to less than five dollars for the seven days in Chicago. Another question is that of the wages to be lost by the week's absence. This is a pertinent question, and I should suggest that the amount to be lost be reckoned in when deciding on the sum to be saved up. That will relieve both the club members and their families from any anxiety.

The entire sum necessary for the trip can vary from $50 to $100, but I believe with skillful management trips allowing for four days' travel and six days' stay in Chicago can be managed for much less than the latter figure and very close to the former.

There is over two years, according to the latest decisions, before the opening of the fair. By the immediate formation of clubs and the payment of from fifty cents to one dollar weekly and the postponement of the trip until toward the close of the fair the necessary sum can be raised.

Besides the benefit to be derived from studying the exhibits, if this fair fund club can be made to cover a big territory it will bring together such a crowd of working women as has never yet met.

Among the possibilities is that the movement may result in a working woman's week, when particular attention could be paid to them in every way.

Aside from the idea of the great benefit promised by the chance to see what has been accomplished by women and the rousing of new ideas and stimulating working women all over the country to a continued effort for equality in work and wages, is this hope that a union of many interests that never has existed may be effected now.

MRS. MCGUIRK

Washington, D. C.

The idea of introducing the referendum for legislative purposes as it exists in Switzerland, where all laws must be submitted to a popular vote, is gaining ground among the Knights of Labor, and many local assemblies have lately passed resolutions declaring that the corrupting influences at work in congress and state legislatures can only be done away with by adopting the referendum system.

WINTER FEEDING.

The Old and New Way of Wintering Range Cattle.

In everything there is a right and wrong way. Often the conditions are such that in following out the wrong way there is considerable profit, and after a while those engaged in the business come to believe that this really wrong way is in reality the right way. The range cattle industry at the outstart—and as a matter of necessity—was conducted on this plan. Cattle were moved into the mountains and turned loose in the high valleys and parks and allowed to rustle. There was a certain percentage of loss each winter, varying in accordance with the amount of snowfall and the severity of the cold. Prices ruled for years so high that the death losses only cut down the size of the dividends, while still leaving a handsome balance in the treasury.

So matters continued. The ranges became overstocked, and following this prices began to tumble. From bad the affairs and general finances of most cattle enterprises continued on the down grade, and failure after failure followed. At a certain period a few of the more enterprising stockmen began to cut hay for winter use. This was found to pay, and others followed in the same path. Their object in feeding was simply to give the poor animals sufficient food to pull them through alive, until they were able to begin to rustle again in the spring. This was all that was aimed at. No thought or care was given to improve the individual animal. The idea of the trade was that this would not pay. If the critter lived the summer and fall feed on the range would make it fit for market.

All this was wrong. However, until the farmer crowded in upon the open range, and fenced his homestead or preemption claim, things were allowed to drift along in this fashion of taking desperate chances and hoping the markets would mend. Rather than mending, the farmers' claims became more numerous and the range cattle industry more disastrous. Each year the cattlemen were obliged to cut more hay to pull the ever increasing number of weak animals through the winter. Still their object was simply to keep life in them until the grass was strong enough in the spring to build them up again. This, in a few brief words, is the outline of the range cattle industry. There is but little wonder that there have been so many dire disasters in the business.

That it pays always to do things right is exemplified in the winter feeding of range cattle as in other callings. By winter feeding we mean what the words imply, not the meager giving out of enough hay to simply prevent the weak animals from turning up their hoofs, but feeding so as to keep the animal in a healthy condition is where there is good clean money for the stockman. The humanitarian question does not enter into the present idea of the gain or loss of the nimble dollar, which is what the cattle growers are after. Fewer numbers and animals of larger frame and better condition and more weight are what give the best returns when the shipments are made.

A day or two ago the writer was going south from Denver, and on the car were two brothers returning to Archuleta county, having disposed of a good bunch of cattle at the top market price. In conversation we asked if there was not good clean money in winter feeding on this plan, and if they had ever given it a good trial. To our surprise and gratification they said the cattle they had just sold were winter fed, and every animal was given hay in plenty to hold it in healthy form.

The result was that in the spring they grew so much faster than the same grade of cattle that had been doing as best they could for themselves on the range, during the months of snow and ice, that when they were marketed they were 30 per cent. better and heavier animals, and brought from 30 to 40 per cent. higher price. When they started from home they thought they would have to go to Omaha or Kansas City to sell. While the yards in Denver were full of common range cattle that buyers did not want save at bottom figures, they made a quick sale at the top price, and were on their homeward way, leaving the owners of the common, non-winter fed stock seeking in vain for customers.

Yes, it pays to do everything in the right way. Now that the range cattle business has been curtailed within such narrow limits and the times not as they once were for the quondam cattle barons, those who do not adopt the genuine winter feeding plan can look forward to ultimate disaster and failure. Such is the handwriting on the wall.—Field and Farm.

It is a notorious fact that the plutocratic railway barons are so utterly cruel, are such merciless monsters, that they deliberately stand by and see thousands of railway men killed and mangled every year whose lives and limbs could have easily been saved by the adoption of automatic couplers. But the latter cost money, and brakemen don't cost anything.—Lester C. Hubbard.

Travel in Africa.

Scene, Central Africa (Arrival of the express train at the chief town). Train Dispatcher (to the engineer)—What does this mean? I don't see any conductor. Engineer—No, the first class passengers have eaten him up since we started.—Fliegende Blatter.

An Involuntary Walk.

"I stood on the bridge at midnight,
While the clocks were striking the hour,"
And the merry wind from Barren isle,
Was whistling through the tower.
Did I stand on the bridge at midnight
Because I enjoyed the fun?
Not much, but it costs three cents to ride,
And all I had was one.
—New York Herald.

Better Still.

Author—Do me the favor, Naggus, to read my book and write it up as soon as you can.

Book Reviewer (personal friend of the author)—I'll do better than that, Borus. I'll write it up and then read it.—Chicago Tribune.

Different Now.

When all the world was young, lad,
And you were very green,
You sang of melting eyes, lad,
And locks of satin sheen;
You saw them in the theatre
And you thought the world so gay,
But now you're on the stage yourself
You do not feel that way.
—Dramatic Mirror.

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